

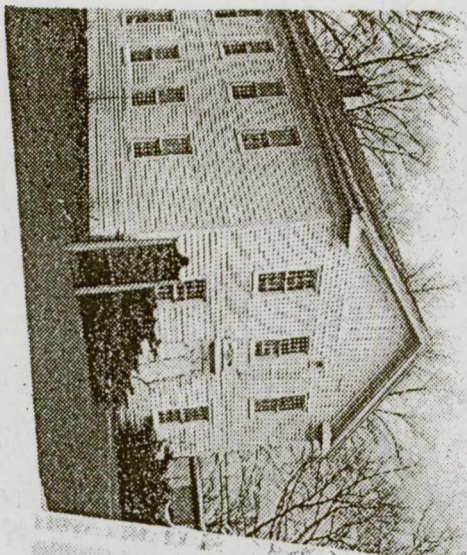
VERMONTVILLE CHAPEL AND ACADEMY
North Main Street, Vermontville, Eaton County

In 1836 a religious group from East Poultney, Vermont, settled in Vermontville, hoping to establish a community devoted to early Congregationalist ideals. Schooling was an important part of this heritage, so in 1838 classes began in a private home, moving soon afterwards to a log schoolhouse. By 1843 the Congregationalists of the area formed an association to build an academy which would also serve as a church. The following year the town's minister began holding classes here. The academy became a respected institution in the area, the educational center of Eaton County until Olivet College opened. It was used for both religious and educational purposes, as well as for town meetings, until the 1870s, when a new school and church were constructed.

The simple frame building remains in generally good condition. The white clapboard exterior, gabled roof (originally shingled but now covered by sheet metal), and modified Greek cornice accurately reflect its origins in the early national period. Inside, the original pine flooring on the first floor is still preserved.

The Vermontville Historical Society maintains the structure, which it uses to display artifacts of local history. The building is still a focal point of the town's life.

A Long Time Ago



By Laura Mead

In 1843 the members of the Vermontville First Congregational Church built an Academy to serve as a chapel, as well as a school.

Today the Academy has been turned into a museum which holds the memories of the original settlers of Vermontville. The only modification to the Academy throughout the years has been a new wooden floor, so that it would be safe for visitors.

Originally a one-story building, the second floor of the Academy was built on in 1844. This floor served as a dining room.

VERMONTVILLE ACADEMY
In 1836 a group from Vermont known as the Union Colony settled here. The members were determined that their children should receive a good education. The Vermontville Academy Association was formed, constructed a building, and opened it for classes in the winter of 1841-42. Vermontville was selected as an ideal location for an academy, since there was little to distract the students from their work. Because most of the Colony were Quakers, the Academy teachers and students were Quakers. Religious services were held here until 1864 when the church across the street was completed. Town meetings were held at the Academy until 1853. Vermontville's first general store opened on the ground floor.

The Academy was full of school children, desks, books and teachers until 1870. Now it has artifacts in it which range from an 1841 Pennsylvania loom (brought over by the first settlers), to a 1915 butter churn. Also in the Academy are events that have been preserved in time by a display in the entrance way.

Today the First Congregational Church of Vermontville has graciously been allowing the Vermontville Historical Society the use of the Academy as a museum.